Newsweek Gives Another Version

LBJ Took Oath on Bobby's Advice

New York, Dec. 26 (UPI) — Newsweek Magazine this week published what it reported to be President Johnson's recollections of his assumption to office following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The magazine's Jan. 2 issue recounts remarks Mr. Johnson allegedly made "to friends" which are reportedly at variance with the portrait of the succession in William Manchester's forthcoming book, "The Death of a President."

Mr. Manchester was selected by the Kennedy family to write an historical account of the President's death.

The book caused a storm of controversy even before publication when Mr. Kennedy's widow, Jacqueline, objected to certain portions.

Newsweek claims that Mr. Johnson stepped into the Presidency at Dallas rather than wait to assume office in Washington at the suggestion of Robert Kennedy, the Attorney-General.

PHONE CALL

According to Newsweek, Mr. Johnson recalled telephoning the dead President's brother for a ruling, saying "I hate to bother you at a time like this, but . . ."

Mr. Kennedy, according to the magazine, told Mr. Johnson, "I think you should be sworn in there." but added that he would have someone check and call him back. Mr. Kennedy did not call back, but Nicholas DeB. Katzenbach, then Deputy Attorney General, returned the call and dictated to a Johnson secretary the exact wording that should be used for the swearing-in ceremony.

Published reports about Mr. Manchester's account of the events on Air Force One have said the author has pictured Mr. Johnson as pushing himself into the presidency with unseemly haste.

Mr. Johnson also is quoted as insisting, against Secret Service recommendations, that Mr. Kennedy's body be carried on the presidential plane with him, rather than travelling on Air Force Two.

"I wasn't going to let Mrs. Kennedy fly back alone with his body" Mr. Johnson reportedly said.

'MINOR'

The magazine said the President admitted to causing some minor friction between himself and the grieving Kennedy family — such as calling Jacqueline "honey", and dressing down the pilot for preparing to take off on a Mr. Kennedy aide's orders.

But, Newsweek contends, "Manchester's account is not nearly so anti-Johnson as some reports in the press suggest."

The magazine also presented some of the painful personal vignettes which have figured in Mrs. Kennedy's legal and editorial battle with publishers of the manchester manuscript.

Among them is a letter she allegedly sent to her husband while on a Mediterranean holiday, one month before the assassination.

"I miss you very much — which is nice — tho it is a bit sad," she wrote. "But when I think how happy I am to miss you — I know I exaggerate everything — but I feel sorry for everybody else who is married."

LBJ WAS 'HURT'

Overall, Newsweek said, the apparently strained relations between the Kennedys and the Johnsons were caused by innocent misunderstandings.

Mr. Johnson, according to the magazine, was hurt and bewildered by charges he grabbed unfeelingly for the office, and compared his experience to that of Harry S. Truman, 18 years earlier.

Mr. Johnson said House Speaker Sam Rayburn had told him just before the death of President Roosevelt that Vice-President Truman "doesn't think anybody likes him."

Even so, according to Newsweek Mr. Johnson recalled, no one accused Mr. Truman of personal power-lust when, that very day, he became the nation's 33rd President.